

Tribute to Kathy Bender: Outreach Worker— Shirley Besler

The Board of Directors of the BC Mission Boat Society (BCMBS) would like, with thanks to God, to pay tribute to Kathy Bender, of our Saviour Lutheran Church in Parksville, BC for the many, many hours of service she has given to this ministry.

Kathy served on the Board of Directors of the BCMBS as President of the Board from 2001 to 2007. Her position changed to Executive Director in 2007. She served as mission leader on the boat for up to 3 weeks each summer and joined many land teams. Her enthusiasm and love for the people in coastal communities and volunteers was evident in all she did.

In 2003, Kathy left her former career to join the BC Mission Boat Society as a part time outreach worker. Her passion for sharing God's love with the people in communities she visited on the coast led her to serve many volunteer hours, as well. She was the driving force in moving the ministry from a summer ministry to a year-round ministry. When she went to visit communities in the fall and winter, she took other individuals

with her. She encouraged land teams to serve in the fall and winter as well as during the summer months. Kathy kept in touch regularly with the friends she made through letters, emails and phone calls.

Kathy is a passionate advocate of the BCMBS, both on behalf of supporting the communities she visited and on behalf of providing mission volunteers with the opportunity to experience faith building. She has spoken in churches, at LWML rallies, and LCC district conventions in Canada. She travelled to Minnesota in 2006 and Florida in 2007 to promote the BC Mission Boat Society and build awareness. She has met with leaders of seminaries and colleges to develop partnering relationships. This partnering led to the opportunity for two interns from Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota to spend their internship years with the BCMBS in 2005/06 and 2007/08. She was instrumental in encouraging and facilitating Concordia Seminary in Edmonton to run a Parish immersion course for 9 Seminary Students in communities on the BC coast in the spring of 2008.

Kathy also enthusiastically worked for young people in the coastal communities. She supported young people from Concordia University College in Edmonton Alberta to work with the mission boat in outreach during their spring reading week every February since 2003. Kathy travelled with these teams each February and made many trips to Edmonton fostering strong partnerships between Concordia University College and the BCMBS. She instituted trips for youth from Klemtu to visit Concordia University and High School in Edmonton, Alberta in 2007 and 2008 as a partnership between the University, Klemtu and the Mission Boat.

Kathy answered God's call to be part of the BC Mission Boat Society's ministry, and she has been a blessing to all she has come in contact with – people in the communities and volunteers alike. It was with great sadness that, due to her illness, she can no longer take an active part in this ministry. We know that her heart is still with this ministry, and her prayers will strengthen those of us who carry on.



Appreciation Luncheon for Kathy

The BCMBS and Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Parksville would like to extend an invitation to all of Kathy's friends & supporters to attend a luncheon in her honour on **SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2009 at 12:00 PM** following the 10:30 AM worship service at Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Parksville.

If you are able to attend, please RSVP to the BC Mission Boat Society office. We also invite you to send greetings and stories to Kathy which will be shared with her during the event. Mail or email them to the office at the address below.

Contributions towards a gift for Kathy, which will be chosen to support her in her own walk of faith and ministry, are welcome.

Marcus Huff, New Executive Director— Skye Donald



In spring 2005, Marcus Huff was handed an envelope containing the details of his upcoming year-long internship that was to make up the fourth year of his Director of Christian Outreach certification at Concordia University in St. Paul, Minnesota. During a university chapel service, third-year students receive their internship assignments and read them out-loud to the congregation. Without any idea of what lay in store for him, Marcus read his assignment: “B.C. Mission Boat Society and Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Parksville, British Columbia.”

Marcus, born and raised in Saint Joseph, Michigan, grew up attending church in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. After completing high school, he headed to Lake Michigan College to pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering. During his second year, feeling pulled by God, he spent an afternoon looking through pamphlets for different programs offered at various Concordia universities, and eventually choose the Director of Christian Outreach (DCO) program “because of its endless possibilities” and because of how it reflected an interest that he had created through his work with the Young Life organization. Once he arrived in Parksville, Marcus was overwhelmed by the warmth of the BCMB family, and the support from the church, as well. “I felt at home to be back on the water again, as I had grown up just minutes from Lake Michigan.” After a successful year of internship during 2005-2006, Marcus returned to Concordia for his final year of studies to complete his degree. In addition to his work with the BC Mission Boat Society, Marcus has also spent time

working with Young Life as a leader and a summer worker in Colorado. He has worked at inner city missions in St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota, and with food-shelters in St. Paul, Minnesota and Benton Harbor, Michigan. In November 2007, he traveled to New Orleans to spend a week helping to rebuild two different churches damaged by Hurricane Katrina. “It was humbling to be a piece of a bigger project. We were there two years after the hurricanes hit, and they were still expecting another seven to eight years of rebuilding the city.”

In December, 2007, Marcus traveled to Klemtu with Josh Patterson (our DCO intern for 2007-2008). Upon returning, he received news of Kathy’s diagnosis with cancer. “We continued to talk after I was home, and shortly after Christmas I mentioned to her that if they (BCMB) needed any help, I would be open to helping out. New Years Day, I received a phone call from Lynn Gergens asking if I would consider coming out and serving a 1 year interim position. The rest is history.”

When Kathy announced that she would not be able to return to her former position with the BC Mission Boat, the Board of Directors was tasked with finding a replacement.

“Marcus’s experience with the BCMB, and the experience of the Board in working with Marcus, moved every member of the Board to feel that God had brought Marcus here to help the BCMB move forward on the base of the wonderful work of those who have come before, including Kathy Bender, who Marcus worked under as an intern with the BCMB,” said pastoral advisor and board-chair Pastor Craig Tufts. His gifts for this ministry include a depth of understanding of people, a love for individuals he has met in the communities, a vision for the potential of people in the communities, and a passion for what God has been doing and can do through the ministry of the BC Mission Boat. When asked why he chose to accept the full-time position of Executive Director for the BC Mission Boat society, Marcus answered, “I feel like this is where God is calling me right now... when I think about what is to come for me in the future, it seems unclear at times, but when I think about the BCMB, I see a vision or potential for what it can be.” Marcus acknowledges that the schedule is demanding, “which is challenging and addictive.” He further remarked that

relationships are the most personally rewarding part of this ministry. “I am honored to have been adopted by the late Elizabeth Neasloss. I love the fact that I get to share Jesus through my words and actions to friends and people that I don’t know yet. I love connecting with new and returning mission teams and helping them share their faith as well as processing their experiences.”

Acknowledging the real challenges of this ministry, Marcus says “there is a greater need than what we can handle or even attempt to do.” How fortunate we are that God supplies us with everything we need, including people like Marcus to take up the helm and carry His message of Good News and hope to all people. We’re glad to have him aboard!

Winter Ministry Update

In our Fall Newsletter, we reported that we would be visiting each of our year-round ministry locations—Klemtu, Bella Bella, Kingcome, Kyuqout, Ehattesah, and Ahousah—to listen to and discuss the needs of each community.

We found all of the discussions very encouraging. Everyone wants us to come more often! Our ministry with children (Kid’s Clubs) is valued in the communities, as they consider it important for the children to learn more about God, Jesus and the Bible. One of the greater needs felt in each community was to work with their youth. They addressed that there are not a lot of programs for them, and they tend to fall through the cracks. In response to our conversation, we working to develop opportunities for youth ministry.

A note from the office

After an amazing year of working with the BC Mission Boat Society, Skye Donald will be leaving the staff in April. Having purchased a 13-acre farm last July, she has her hands full! “I have learned a great deal: practical skills, personal revelations and spiritual challenges. I hope that in the future there will be an opportunity for me to continue to serve in this ministry in a small way, either as a support or mission-field volunteer.” Skye is especially fond of her two visits to Kingcome, and hopes to visit again soon.

Concordia University-College of Alberta—February 2009 Missions

This February, Concordia University-College in Edmonton sent 20 students and a chaplain to be part of mission teams to the communities of Ahousaht, Klemtu, Bella Bella and Ehatesaht (Zeballos). This is the seventh year that students from Concordia have participated in missions with the B.C. Mission Boat Society during their spring reading-week. Thank-you to the communities that welcomed the teams, including Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Parksville, where the teams stayed before and after their trips for orientation and debriefing. Here are some stories and photos from this year's teams:

"I came to Bella Bella last month as part of a mission team from Concordia University in Edmonton, Alberta. As a University student and music student my life is constantly running on full-speed mode with projects, ensembles, people to meet and others to keep in touch with from back home. Just before our group had left for the missions trip, I had this weird idea that if I tried hard enough, I could get my life in control by the things I did and, most importantly, how efficiently I spent my time. Entering Bella Bella was like putting on a different pair of eyes and feet - being able to take the world and the moments that come, and listen to the song that was being made of my life and those around me. These people were constantly faced with situations that were truly out of their control - and as the week went on, I began to see that life truly isn't in anyone's control but the Great Creator's. Meeting the people of the village and seeing what they were going through made me realize how truly out of my control my life really was but what surprised me was how peaceful that realization was to recognize.

At one point during the trip, a couple people on my team had appointed the nick-name "Martha" to me for my constant need to just get things done, and get control of the time we had in hand. It was done in love and humor, but out of it came a realization that living life in this fast-paced world without acknowledging who's really the master-planner will spin me in circles, and get me nowhere. Instead, I learned to be still and know that God is always there composing my life ahead of me, and because of that, I can live without fear day by day and moment by moment completely as it's granted to me."

- **Kristen Kahle.** This was Kristen's first mission with the BCMBS.



"In February, I participated in Concordia University College of Alberta's annual mission trip to the BC coast. Krysta Earl, myself, and Julia Paterson lead a team that went to Klemtu, BC to do kids camps, visits, and bible studies. One of the highlights of the trip was flying into Klemtu in a floatplane; the pilot even let one of our team members take the wheel for a few minutes: that was a little scary! Throughout the week we were able to visit elders in the community, and sometimes even sing songs and play music with them. On the last day that we were in Klemtu, I was told by Krysta that she and I were going to go talk to somebody about God. Hearing this sort of thing is not uncommon as there were plenty of bible studies going on throughout the week, so I thought nothing of it. When we arrived at the house, I was told that this person wanted to talk one on one with another guy, so we started talking. He told me that he wanted to become a Christian, but didn't know how. We were able to pray together and read the Bible, as well as find some Christians in the community to support him when we left. I was not at all expecting this sort of event to happen: this man had not been involved with us earlier in the week, and had previously been fairly hostile towards Christianity. It is amazing how God works."

- **Mark Roller.** This was Mark's second mission with the BCMBS.

"Our team has given thanks to God that in every way, He has kept us and worked through us (often despite us) to be a part of Christ's mercy and grace in the communities we visited. To see the genuine love and appreciation of the people for our presence with the Gospel was heartening, and provided great joy and hope not just for us, but, we pray, for the people in the communities as well. Best of all, many of the friendships we fostered will continue as we contact them, and continue as parts of their lives in Christ. Thanks be to God in Christ that His mercy and love bound strangers from different places and backgrounds to be one in him, and to a part of that living hope which comes in the forgiveness of sins, and resurrection of Jesus Christ alone!

Every blessing to Markus, Rhonda, Skye, Julia, Pastor Tufts and all who gave of their time in so many ways!"

- **Mark Sander,** Intern Chaplain, Concordia University-College of Alberta. Mark accompanied this year's Concordia teams and visited the community of Ahousaht.



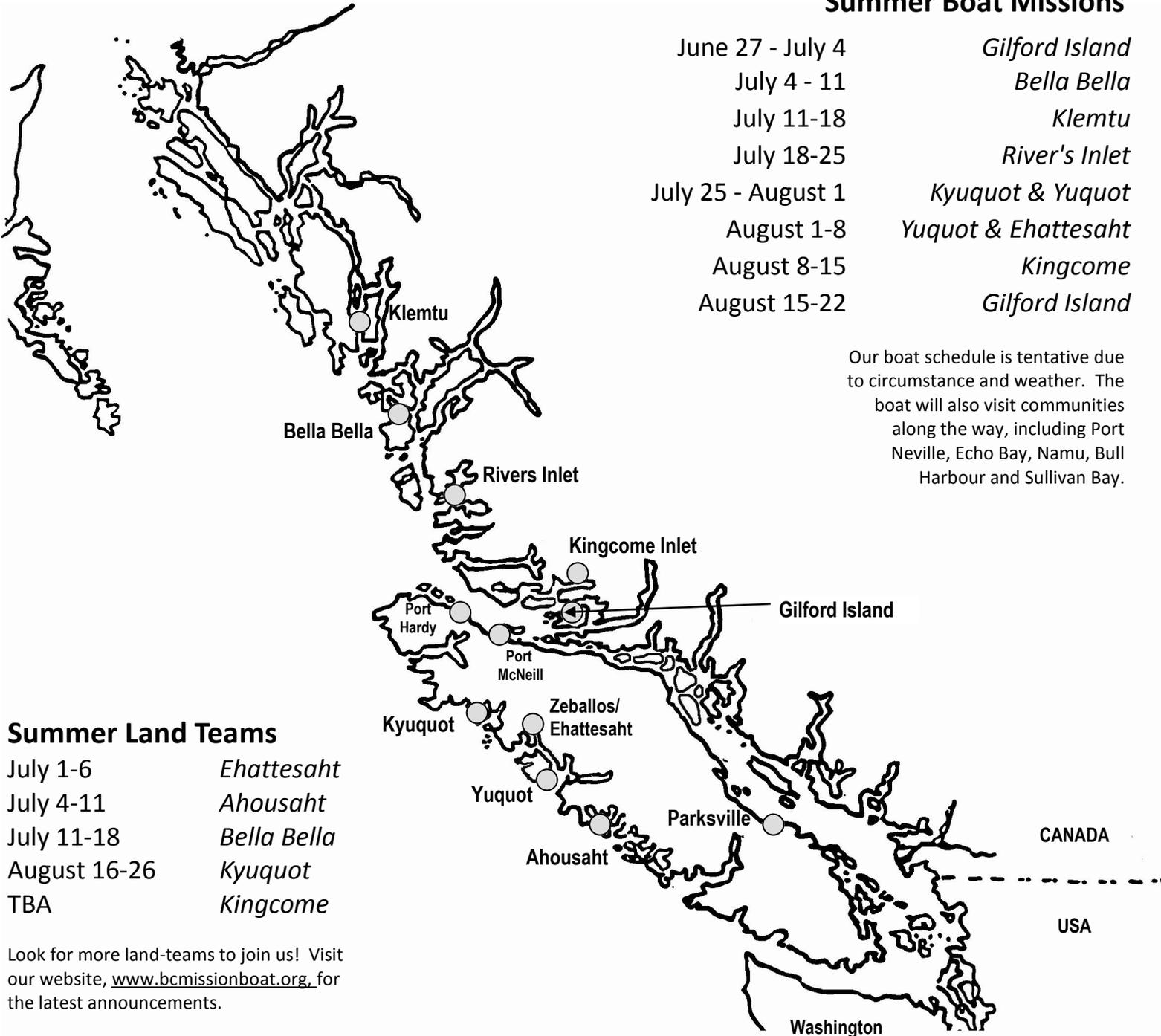
SUMMER 2009: LAND & BOAT MISSIONS

Connecting people in coastal British Columbian communities with Christ's love.

Summer Boat Missions

June 27 - July 4	<i>Gilford Island</i>
July 4 - 11	<i>Bella Bella</i>
July 11-18	<i>Klemtu</i>
July 18-25	<i>River's Inlet</i>
July 25 - August 1	<i>Kyuquot & Yuquot</i>
August 1-8	<i>Yuquot & Ehattesaht</i>
August 8-15	<i>Kingcome</i>
August 15-22	<i>Gilford Island</i>

Our boat schedule is tentative due to circumstance and weather. The boat will also visit communities along the way, including Port Neville, Echo Bay, Namu, Bull Harbour and Sullivan Bay.



Summer Land Teams

July 1-6	<i>Ehattesaht</i>
July 4-11	<i>Ahousaht</i>
July 11-18	<i>Bella Bella</i>
August 16-26	<i>Kyuquot</i>
TBA	<i>Kingcome</i>

Look for more land-teams to join us! Visit our website, www.bcmissionboat.org, for the latest announcements.

Look for us! The BC Mission Boat has a maroon flag with our logo flying on the 46' Tyee-J. When you see us, come visit us for coffee, tea, hot chocolate and cookies: we love to have visitors aboard!



Getting Ready for Summer 2009!— Rhonda Kelman

We are really excited to see what God has in store for this summer! Our boat is scheduled to run for eight weeks this summer, including two weeks on the West Coast of Vancouver Island. We are currently seeking individuals who would like to become a crew member and spend a week aboard the boat. A week aboard the boat runs from Saturday to Saturday, with orientation in Parksville on the Friday evening before departure. The week starts with a crew change usually in Port Hardy or Port McNeill. The boat then travels to a

community where they usually offer a Kid's Club, which is like Vacation Bible School. Other activities include youth nights, home visits, Bible studies, craft nights, song and fellowship nights. During the day there is always a pot of coffee on, and cookies are available for anyone who wants to come and visit with us.

We are also in need of captains to drive the Mission Boat! If you are a qualified captain or know of anyone who is qualified and would be interested, please contact us as soon as possible.

The other part of our ministry is to travel into communities with land based teams. We are currently booking teams for Summer 2009. The activities that you might facilitate would be a Kid's Club, youth nights, song and fellowship nights, Bible studies, and going to do some home visits. It is amazing to see how God works through the friendships we make with people of all ages in each community. We are able to encourage, and strengthen Christians in the community as well as be an example for those who are

searching.

All of our boat-based and land-based teams are part of our year round ministry plan, and they could not be done without all of our mission volunteers who join us for a trip or two! God definitely has a plan for each one of His children, and it is an amazing blessing to participate in these trips. Though we go in prepared with a tentative plan, we remain open to God's plan and to be surprised by God in ways we could never have imagined.

Rhonda's Update: Spring Missions, 2009



- It has been a busy spring! During February, 4-teams of Students from Concordia University in Edmonton travelled to Ahousaht, Bella Bella, Ehattesaht (Zeballos), and Klemtu. (See the article on page 3 of this newsletter). I joined the Ahousaht team. Marcus travelled to Ehattesaht; Pastor Craig went to Bella Bella and Julia Paterson, board member, accompanied the Klemtu team.
- This spring, I am planning visits to Ahousaht the first Wednesday to Saturday each month from March until June. During these trips I hope to do house visits, a Ladies craft night, a youth night, and participating in the Fellowship night that is held every Wednesday evening in Ahousaht.

- The Junior All Native Basketball Tournament took place in Port Alberni March 15-20, and Marcus and I were fortunate to make it to a few games to show support and meet up with youth and adults we know from various communities that we visit.
- In April we are planning a ten day visit to Klemtu to attend and help with a Memorial Tombstone Feast that is taking place for the late Elizabeth Neasloss. Betty was very active in the community and with her family, as well as the lay minister for the church.
- We have been able to visit with more and more friends from communities right here in Parksville, Nanaimo and Campbell River. It is awesome to see our friends contact us when they are close by our homes so that we can meet up with them here too! If you're going to be passing through, please give us a call or send us an email so we can get together!

Top Photo: Kids Club in Klemtu

Bottom Photo: Friends in Ahousaht, Feb. 2009



Who Is My Neighbour?— Pastor Craig Tufts

I would begin to answer this question by listing the many people who were so friendly to me on my recent trip to Bella Bella, but that would leave out far too many others. So bear with me for a minute, and consider a different answer. An expert in the law, who wanted to test Jesus, asked Jesus to clarify “who is my neighbor” that I am to love as I love my very self? Frederick Buechner (in Wishful Thinking, A Seeker’s ABC) has this wonderful answer for what he believes the expert in the law was looking for:

“A neighbor (hereinafter referred to as the party of the first part) is to be construed as meaning a person of Jewish descent whose legal residence is within a radius of no more than three statute miles from one’s own legal residence unless there is another person of Jewish descent (hereinafter referred to as the party of the second part) living closer to the party of the first part than one is oneself, in which case the party of the second part is construed as neighbor to the party of the first part and one is relieved of all responsibility of any sort or kind whatsoever.”

But that is not what the expert in the law heard. Instead, Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan (see Luke 10:25-37). Like others, usually this reminds me that Jesus wants me to see all the people around me, no matter how different, to be people that I am to love at their point of need. However, after my recent trip to Bella Bella, and the truly wonderful friendship and hospitality shown to myself and the young people from Concordia University, I find myself pondering a different answer. Who is my neighbour? My neighbour is every person who has ever seen my need, and responded to it.

Thank you, dear people of Bella Bella, for this thought. So, on that note, as the Chairman of the Board of the BC Mission Boat, I want to thank all of you who have been neighbours. Thank you to all of you in the communities we visit, who have been so neighbourly. Thank you to those who, 10 years ago, saw our need to be neighbourly, and began what is now the BC Mission Boat Society. Thank you to all the office staff and Board members who since then have seen this need, and helped it be fulfilled. Thank you to all who have come along on trips to be neighbourly, and be neighboured. Most important, thank you, Jesus, for showing us the grace of God that enables us to receive, and give, as God intended.

Who is my neighbour? If we ask this question like the expert in the law did, as a test, it can lead us to say “No one.” May Jesus continue to turn this question into a source of blessing for you. May you continue to ask it, and may God bless you with many truly wonderful answers to it. And may God bless us all in continuing to grow in all that Jesus wants us to see in the parable of the Good Samaritan.



The Parable of the Good Samaritan—Luke 10:25-37

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

He answered: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’^L; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’^{1U}”

“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going

down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

“Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

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